

CLAIMS

1. A gateway system relaying a request from a user for a service provided by another system,
5 the gateway system characterized by comprising:

an authentication unit which receives the
request and authenticates the user;

10 an service request unit which makes the
request on behalf of the user based on a result of
an authentication by said authentication unit, using
link information and authentication information
corresponding to the requested service; and

15 an information link unit which
incorporates link information concerning the gateway
system into link information included in returned
data corresponding to the request.

2. The gateway system as claimed in claim
1, characterized by having a plurality of systems
20 each including said authentication unit, said
service request unit, and said information link unit,
the systems being provided in a hierarchical
structure.

25 3. The gateway system as claimed in claim
1, characterized in that:

30 said service request unit comprises a
table in which accessible service information
retained by the user is entered, and makes the
request for a service on behalf of the user when the
service is accessible to the user.

35 4. The gateway system as claimed in claim
1, characterized in that:

35 said service request unit comprises a
table in which an option ID serving as a billing
unit is entered in correspondence to the system

providing the service, and transmits the option ID in making the request.

5. The gateway system as claimed in claim
5 1, characterized in that:

said information link unit converts the link information included in the returned data into the link information concerning the gateway system, the link information included in the returned data 10 being included in control information set in the returned data, the control information including access information of the user to a WWW server.

6. The gateway system as claimed in claim
15 2, characterized in that:

said information link unit converts the link information included in the returned data into the link information concerning the gateway system, the link information included in the returned data 20 being included in control information set in the returned data, the control information including access information of the user to a WWW server.

7. The gateway system as claimed in claim
25 3, characterized in that:

said information link unit converts the link information included in the returned data into the link information concerning the gateway system, the link information included in the returned data 30 being included in control information set in the returned data, the control information including access information of the user to a WWW server.

8. The gateway system as claimed in claim
35 4, characterized in that:

said information link unit converts the link information included in the returned data into

the link information concerning the gateway system,
the link information included in the returned data
being included in control information set in the
returned data, the control information including
5 access information of the user to a WWW server.

9. A computer-readable recording medium
comprising:

a program which causes a computer to
10 execute the steps of:
 (a) authenticating a user upon receiving a
request for a service from the user;
 (b) making the request on behalf of the
user based on a result of authenticating the user,
15 using link information and authentication
information corresponding to the requested service;
and
 (c) incorporating link information
concerning a gateway system into link information
20 included in returned data corresponding to the
request.

10. The computer-readable recording
medium as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that:

25 said step (b) comprises a table in which
accessible service information retained by the user
is entered, and makes the request for a service on
behalf of the user when the service is accessible to
the user.

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11. The computer-readable recording
medium as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that:
 said step (b) comprises a table in which
an option ID serving as a billing unit is entered in
35 correspondence to a system providing the service,
and transmits the option ID in making the request.

12. The computer-readable recording
medium as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that:
said step (c) converts the link
information included in the returned data into the
link information concerning the gateway system, the
link information included in the returned data being
included in control information set in the returned
data, the control information including access
information of the user to a WWW server.

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13. The computer-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that:

15 said step (c) converts the link information included in the returned data into the link information concerning the gateway system, the link information included in the returned data being included in control information set in the returned data, the control information including access
20 information of the user to a WWW server.

14. The computer-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that:

25 said step (c) converts the link
information included in the returned data into the
link information concerning the gateway system, the
link information included in the returned data being
included in control information set in the returned
30 data, the control information including access
information of the user to a WWW server.